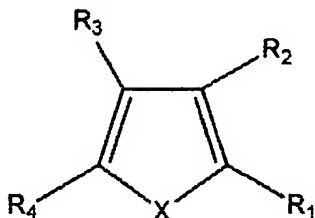


**In the Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows.

19 (original). A method for treating sickle cell disease in a patient in need thereof, comprising the step of administering to said patient a compound of the formula:



wherein

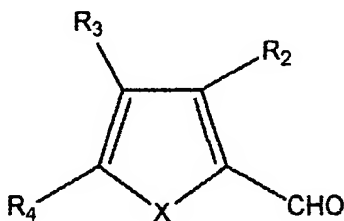
R<sub>1</sub> is CHO or an aldehyde protecting thiozolidine group;

R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> and R<sub>4</sub> are the same or different and selected from the group consisting of H, OH, alkyl, halogen and hydroxyl-alkyl; and

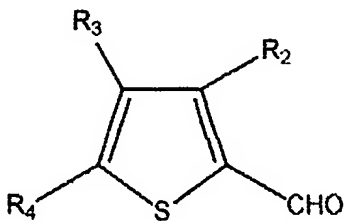
X= O or S;

and wherein said compound is administered in sufficient amount to said patient to ameliorate sickle cell disease.

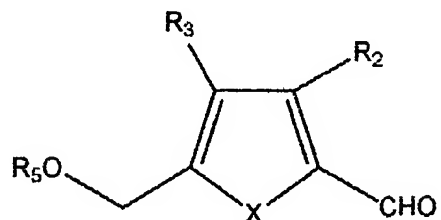
20(original). The method of claim 19, wherein R<sub>1</sub> is CHO; R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> = H; R<sub>4</sub> is H, alkyl or hydroxyalkyl; and X=O and the general formula of the compound is:



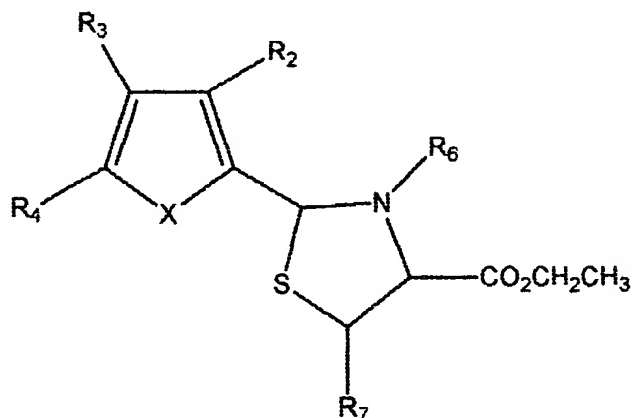
21(original). The method of claim 20, wherein R<sub>1</sub> is CHO; R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> = H; R<sub>4</sub> is H, alkyl or hydroxyalkyl; and X =S and the general formula of the compound is:



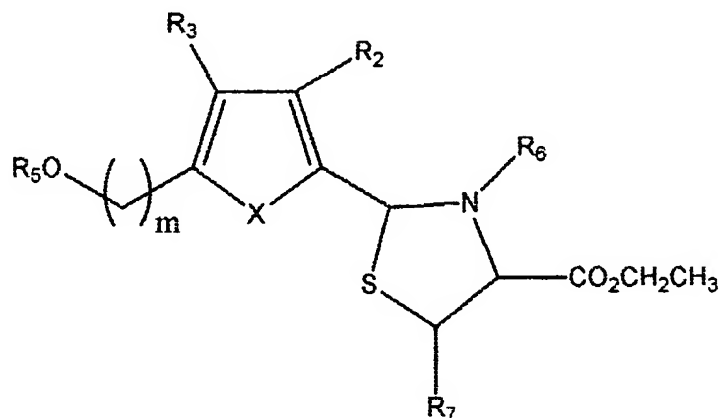
22(original). The method of claim 20, wherein R1 is CHO; R2 and R3 =H; R4 is hydroxymethyl; and X =O and the general formula of the compound is:



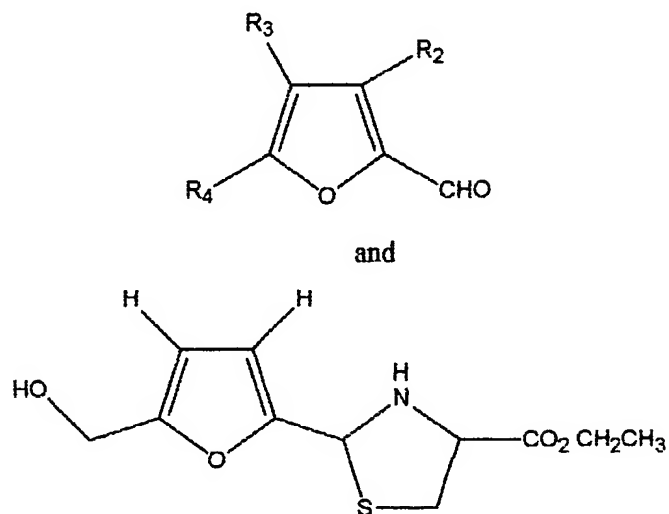
23(original). The method of claim 19, wherein R1 is a heterocyclic thiazolidine ring; R2, R3 = H; R4 is alkyl or O-alkyl; R6 and R7 =H; and X = O and the general formula of the compound is:



24(original). The method of claim 23, wherein R1 is a thiazolidine ring, R2 and R3 = H; R4 is hydroxymethyl; m = 1; and R6 and R7= H, and the general formula of the compound is:



25(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of a compound of the formula:



wherein,  $R_1$  is a substituent as shown in the formulae above;  $R_2$  and  $R_3 = H$  and  $R_4 = CH_2OH$ .

26(original). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-hydroxymethyl-2-furaldehyde.

27(original). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 2-(5-hydroxymethyl-furan-2-yl)-thiazolidine-4-carboxylic acid ethyl ester.

28(original). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-methyl-furaldehyde.

29(original). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-ethyl-furaldehyde.